

# DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION SERVICES BULLETIN 2013-3

Agency Heads

April 3, 2013

Bureau Heads

Telephone Coordinators:

## **Re: REVIEW YOUR REQUESTS TO AVOID UNINTENDED SERVICE DISCONNECTION AND ADDITIONAL COSTS TO YOUR AGENCY**

In order to reduce agency telephone expenditures, the Municipal Telephone Exchange (MTE) processes changes to services such as terminations and periodic suspension of telephone lines. In the course of processing these orders, the MTE has noticed some issues.

Agencies have requested the disconnection (termination) of critical alarm or other lines and circuits, but turned around within a short period to request these same lines to be reconnected. This impacts service delivery due to downtime, places City assets at risk, is costly to your agency and the City because Verizon charges for reconnecting lines, and is time consuming.

Other issues identified include requests to disconnect lines that were previously disconnected based upon the agency's submission of a prior Telephone Service Request (TSR), requests to disconnect lines that do not belong to the requesting agency or lines that do not belong to the City.

The unintended consequences of failing to carefully review how the line or circuit is used and to confirm that the line or circuit belongs to your agency before submitting a TSR are counterproductive and will not result in cost-savings. Rather the opposite will occur and additional work will be required by your agency, the MTE and the vendor. When an unintended disconnection occurs, agencies frequently request the same number. If the number was not a Centrex number, this may not always be possible. The City's Centrex numbers are assigned solely to the City and no other entity. However, if a non-Centrex number is disconnected, that number is available to the vendor to assign to anyone.

In the Department of Communication Services Bulletin 2013-1, the importance of performing the review of the use of your lines was discussed.

To minimize unintended service disruption, additional costs and duplication of work, prior to submitting TSRs for termination or suspension of service the agency must:

1. for service disconnection review the service requests to:
  - a. make certain that the number to be disconnected appears on the agency's most current monthly bill, that it is a landline not a cellular number and does not belong to another City agency, and
  - b. verify that the line is active but not needed. (Suggested ways to verify the line include researching your records of the line and how it is used, dialing the number to see if anyone answers; if when the number is dialed you get a fast busy or a recording that advises the caller the number is disconnected these are indicators that the line is no longer active),
2. for requests for the suspension of lines state how long the line should be suspended by the carrier (**Note:** suspension of service does not stop billing; this only suspends the line temporarily not the monthly cost),
3. after the suspension period expires, submit a new TSR if the agency wants the line to be disconnected. It is incumbent upon the agency after the suspension period if the agency does not want to keep the line active. Failure to submit a new TSR requesting termination of the line after the suspension period, will result in continued billing by Verizon because the line is active.
4. submit all requests for disconnecting cell phones on a separate request by submitting to [cpr@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:cpr@baltimorecity.gov).

Once a line is disconnected, it takes Verizon at least one billing cycle to update its records. Agencies should therefore allow at least 60 days for these changes to be reflected on their monthly bills.

If upon review of the TSR, the MTE determines that there are problems because the service request has not been reviewed as

describe above, it will be necessary to return the TSR for correction by the agency.

**Simon Etta, Acting Director**